DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 111 531 PS 008 101

AUTHOR Bell, T. H.
TITLE Parenting and the Public Schools.
PUB DATE 2 Jun 75
NOTE 12p.; Paper presented at the Annual Convention of the National Congress of Parents and Teachers (Atlantic City, New Jersey, June 2, 1975)

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.76 HC-$1.58 Plus Postage
DESCRIPTORS *Adolescents; Child Development; Community Health Services; *Educational Policy; High School Curriculum; High School Students; Parent Education; *Parenthood Education; *Public Schools; *Secondary Education

ABSTRACT

The United States educational system has a responsibility to provide adults with the necessary education to raise healthy, productive children. Learning how to be a parent does not appear to be a routine part of the growing-up process today. Therefore, in order to maximize the essential early development of children, parenthood training becomes increasingly important. People can be taught to become effective parents by teaching them about child growth and development. It is suggested that this training should take place in the secondary school since this is often the last formal education many young citizens will receive. Several existing programs which train people to become informed parents are described. Additional programs are needed through which parent education and child development services could be delivered to communities through neighborhood schools. (BRT)

****
* Documents acquired by ERIC include many informal unpublished *
* materials not available from other sources. ERIC makes every effort *
* to obtain the best copy available. nevertheless, items of marginal *
* reproducibility are often encountered and this affects the quality *
* of the microfiche and hardcopy reproductions ERIC makes available *
* via the ERIC Document Reproduction Service (EDRS). EDRS is not *
* responsible for the quality of the original document. Reproductions *
* supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made from the original. *
****

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION
THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY

ED111531

PS 08101

JUL. 15 1975

PARENTING AND THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS *

T. H. BELL

U.S. COMMISSIONER OF EDUCATION

THE TASK OF AMERICAN EDUCATION IS COMPLICATED BY THE FACT THAT IT SERVES A DEMOCRATIC SOCIETY. EDUCATING WOULD BE EASIER IF WE COULD DICTATE VALUES AND FEED FACTS INTO A COMPUTER TO ARRIVE AT A PRODUCT EDUCATED ON RIGID, PREDEFINED LINES. BUT OUR IDEAS WILL NOT PERMIT THIS APPROACH TO EDUCATION. OUR JOB IS THE DIFFICULT ONE OF BRINGING OUT THE BEST IN REAL LIVE CHILDREN WHILE RESPECTING THEIR DIFFERENT VALUES, GOALS, AND CULTURES AND OFFERING THEM THE MOST POSSIBLE FREEDOM OF CHOICE AND SEEING TO IT THAT THEY GET THE MAXIMUM FREEDOM OF OPPORTUNITY.

FREEDOM GOES TO THE VERY CORE OF WHO WE ARE AND WHAT WE BECOME, EVEN INTO THE REALM OF OUR INTELLIGENCE.

MORE AND MORE, RESEARCH SHOWS THAT OUR ABILITY TO LEARN QUICKLY AND EASILY CAN BE SIGNIFICANTLY EXPANDED BEYOND WHAT WE WERE BORN WITH. BUT RESEARCH ALSO TELLS US THAT WE MUST BRING CERTAIN GROWTH EXPERIENCES TO CHILDREN BEFORE THEY REACH THE AGE OF FIVE TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THIS POSSIBILITY.

THE EXPERIENCES OF THE FIRST FEW YEARS OF LIFE, THEN, DETERMINE THE EXTENT TO WHICH A CHILD WILL BE ABLE TO PROFIT FROM AND ENJOY FREEDOM OF OPPORTUNITY IN A FREE SOCIETY.

---

* PREPARED FOR ANNUAL CONVENTION OF THE NATIONAL CONGRESS OF PARENTS AND TEACHERS; ATLANTIC CITY, NEW JERSEY, JUNE 2, 1975, 8:00 P.M.

BEFORE CHILDREN CAN REACH THEIR FULL POTENTIAL THEY MUST DEVELOP CERTAIN ATTITUDES. CHILDREN MUST RESPECT LEARNING. THEY NEED TO ACQUIRE A SENSE OF SELF AND CONFIDENCE IN THEIR OWN BEHAVIOR. THE GREAT EXPERIENCE OF EARLY CHILDHOOD IS TO FIND OUT THAT YOU ARE SOMEONE WHO COUNTS IN A VERY INTERESTING WORLD. A CHILD'S PRIDE AND PLEASURE IN HIMSELF, HIS ABILITY TO RELATE TO OTHERS, TO REASON, TO IMAGINE -- ALL THESE ARE LARGELY ESTABLISHED CHARACTERISTICS BY THE TIME HE FIRST COMES THROUGH THE SCHOOL DOOR.

THE QUESTION OF RESPONSIBILITY ARISES. WHO SHOULD BE RESPONSIBLE FOR ASSURING THAT THE POTENTIAL OF EACH CHILD IS MAXIMIZED?

THE DEBATE OVER WHETHER EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION SHOULD BE GIVEN BY AN INSTITUTION, BY PARENTS, OR BY PROFESSIONALS COMING TO THE HOME IS MARKED BY EMOTIONAL, POLITICAL, AND ECONOMIC CONFLICTS.

AS THINGS STAND TODAY, HOWEVER, THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR PRESCHOOL EDUCATION IS STILL WITH THE PARENTS, AS THE MOST COST-EFFECTIVE, PRACTICAL, AND EMOTIONALLY AGREEABLE WAY TO PROVIDE EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT SERVICES. MOST EARLY LEARNING EXPERIENCES OCCUR IN THE HOME, WHERE THE CHILD SPENDS OVER 95 PERCENT OF HIS OR HER FIRST FIVE YEARS. PARENTS ARE MOST AWARE OF THE STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES OF THEIR CHILDREN, AND THEY HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO OBSERVE AND CONTRIBUTE TO THEIR INTELLECTUAL GROWTH. THEY ARE THE FIRST TEACHERS AND ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR A CHILD'S ULTIMATE PHYSICAL AND INTELLECTUAL DEVELOPMENT.

IF EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE HOME, HOW ARE PUBLIC EDUCATORS CONCERNED? AS EDWARD ZIGLER, A FORMER DIRECTOR OF THE OFFICE OF CHILD DEVELOPMENT, HAS POINTED OUT:

THE DEVELOPMENT OF A CHILD DOES NOT BEGIN THE DAY HE IS BORN -- OR AT THE AGE OF THREE -- BUT MUCH EARLIER, DURING THE FORMATIVE YEARS OF HIS PARENTS.

THE SCHOOL'S TASK IS TO ASSURE THAT ADULTS WILL HAVE THE EDUCATION THEY NEED TO RAISE HEALTHY, PRODUCTIVE CHILDREN.

WHILE THE HOME IS STILL THE MOST IMPORTANT AND PRIMARY CENTER FOR INSTRUCTION, IT IS BECOMING A DECREASINGLY ACTIVE AND EFFECTIVE SOURCE OF GUIDANCE. FAMILIES HAVE FEWER CHILDREN; THUS THERE ARE FEWER AT-HOME CHILD RAISING EXAMPLES. LEARNING HOW TO BE A PARENT IS NO LONGER A ROUTINE PART OF THE GROWING-UP PROCESS. MORE MOTHERS ARE WORKING FULL TIME, AND THE DIVORCE RATE IS HIGHER. PARENTING INCREASES IN DIFFICULTY AS OUR SOCIETY INCREASES IN COMPLEXITIES AND AS THE FAMILY UNIT BECOMES LESS COHESIVE THAN EVER BEFORE.

SOME RATHER BLEAK STATISTICS ILLUSTRATE THE WANING EFFECTIVENESS OF THE HOME:

ONE OUT OF FIVE CHILDREN FROM 14 TO 17 YEARS OF AGE LIVES IN A ONE-PARENT HOME.

ONE OF EVERY 10 SEVENTEEN-YEAR-OLD GIRLS IN THE U.S. IS A MOTHER.

AN ESTIMATED 210,000 SCHOOL-AGE GIRLS UNDER AGE 18 GIVE BIRTH IN A YEAR, AND 85 PERCENT OF THEM KEEP THEIR CHILD TO RAISE.

THREE OUT OF FOUR 'TEEN-AGE MARRIAGES END IN DIVORCE.

ALTHOUGH SOME OF THESE STATISTICS ARE 3 OR 4 YEARS OLD, I SUBMIT THEY SHOW RATHER CONCLUSIVELY THAT MANY OF THE PROBLEMS WE HAVE IN

SCHOOLS TODAY STEM FROM PROBLEMS FOUND IN THE HOMES, THE FAMILY STRUCTURE, AND FUNDAMENTAL VALUES OF OUR SOCIETY. AS A NUMBER OF OBSERVERS HAVE NOTED, WE HAVE BECOME A MATERIALISTIC NATION, ROOTLESS, A NATION OF RESTLESS SEEKERS OF THRILLS AND KICKS.

IN THE MEANTIME EVIDENCE CONTINUES TO EMERGE THAT WHAT IS DONE BY THE FAMILY IN THE HOME ENVIRONMENT HAS A FAR GREATER INFLUENCE ON CHILDREN THAN ANYTHING A SCHOOL CAN DO, OR UNDO. UNSTABLE HOMES, WITH PARENTS IN MOTION DAY AND NIGHT AND OVER WEEKENDS, MAKE IT DIFFICULT, IF NOT IMPOSSIBLE, FOR TEACHERS AND SCHOOLS TO MEET THEIR FULL RESPONSIBILITIES AND LIVE UP TO THEIR FULL POTENTIAL IN EDUCATING STUDENTS.

WE MUST REARRANGE OUR VALUES AND THINK MORE ABOUT MARRIAGE THAN MONEY, MORE ABOUT CHILDREN. WE MUST TEACH A NEW GENERATION THAT SENSUOUSNESS AND MATERIALISM WILL BRING NEITHER LASTING JOY NOR PROMISE FOR THEIR CHILDREN, OR THEIR CHILDREN'S CHILDREN.

PARENTHOOD TRAINING, MUST BE MADE AVAILABLE TO ALL YOUNG PEOPLE -- 'TEEN-AGE PARENTS OR JUST PARENTS TO BE. WE EDUCATORS CAN HELP STRENGTHEN THE FAMILY AS THE FUNDAMENTAL UNIT IN AMERICAN SOCIETY IF WE START PEOPLE THINKING ABOUT PARENTHOOD WHILE THEY ARE STILL IN SCHOOL. LET US ASSURE THAT EVERY YOUNGSTER GRADUATING FROM HIGH SCHOOL IS COMPETENT TO BE A PARENT.

THE SECONDARY SCHOOL IS OUR LAST OPPORTUNITY TO REACH YOUNG CITIZENS, FOR THIS IS THE LAST FORMAL EDUCATION MANY OF THEM WILL RECEIVE. EVEN THOSE WHO CONTINUE THEIR FORMAL EDUCATION OFTEN HAVE NO FUTURE OPPORTUNITIES FOR GENERAL TRAINING BECAUSE THE FIELD THEY ENTER BECOMES MORE NARROW AND TECHNICAL.

THROUGH GENERAL PARENTHOOD EDUCATION WE CAN ALLEVIATE SOME TROUBLES COMMON AMONG YOUNG PARENTS AND CAN IMPROVE BOTH THE PHYSICAL AND INTELLECTUAL DEVELOPMENT OF FUTURE STUDENTS. SCHOOLS CAN PROVIDE THE INFORMATION YOUNG PEOPLE MUST HAVE TO MAKE AN INTELLIGENT CHOICE WHETHER TO BE A PARENT AND, IF SO, WHEN AND HOW OFTEN. KNOWLEDGE ABOUT HEREDITARY DISORDERS, BLOOD INCOMPATIBILITIES, GENETIC AND CHROMOSOMAL DISORDERS MAY INFLUENCE THEIR DECISION.

KNOWLEDGE ABOUT BIRTH DEFECTS MAY HELP FUTURE PARENTS PREVENT THE POSSIBILITY OF HAVING HANDICAPPED CHILDREN AND MAY HELP THEM RECOGNIZE IMPAIRMENTS EARLY. THE SCHOOLS CAN POINT OUT THE IMPORTANCE TO A CHILD'S ULTIMATE PHYSICAL AND INTELLECTUAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE NUTRITION THE MOTHER RECEIVES DURING PREGNANCY.

SOME REPORTS POINT OUT THE UNREALISTIC EXPECTATIONS OF MOST YOUNG PARENTS. EDUCATION CAN HELP REDUCE FRUSTRATIONS AND POSSIBLY EVEN CHILD-ABUSE BY POINTING OUT WHAT IT IS REASONABLE TO EXPECT OF CHILDREN AT VARIOUS STAGES OF DEVELOPMENT.

MOST IMPORTANT, PUBLIC EDUCATION CAN ASSURE THAT PARENTS ARE EQUIPPED WITH THE KINDS OF SKILLS REQUIRED TO MAXIMIZE THE INTELLECTUAL GROWTH OF THEIR PRESCHOOL CHILDREN. WE CAN TEACH TECHNIQUES TO OBSERVE AND ANALYZE CHILD BEHAVIOR AND WAYS TO COMMUNICATE WITH YOUNG CHILDREN. WE CAN BUILD DESIGNS FOR CREATIVE CHILD ACTIVITIES. WE CAN SHOW PEOPLE HOW TO BECOME EFFECTIVE PARENTS BY TEACHING THEM ABOUT CHILD GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT.

WHAT PEOPLE ULTIMATELY BECOME, AND THE DEGREE OF FREEDOM WITH WHICH THEY CAN PURSUE A FULL LIFE, REST ON THE EXTENT THEIR PARENTS HAVE BEEN

USEFUL IN NURTURING THEIR INTELLECT DURING THEIR FIRST FEW YEARS. BY TRAINING PEOPLE IN THEIR FORMATIVE YEARS TO BE CONSTRUCTIVE PARENTS WE CAN MAXIMIZE THE ABILITY OF EVERY AMERICAN AND ASSURE TRUE FREEDOM OF OPPORTUNITY.

WE IN THE U.S. OFFICE OF EDUCATION ARE FOLLOWING WITH GREAT INTEREST THE "PARENTING-PTA" PROGRAM OF THE NATIONAL CONGRESS OF PARENTS AND TEACHERS. I HEARTILY SUPPORT THE PROGRAM'S OBJECTIVE OF MAKING EDUCATION FOR PARENTHOOD A PART OF HIGH SCHOOL CURRICULUMS. I ADMIRE THE FOLLOWUP ACTIVITIES WHICH THE NATIONAL CONGRESS AND YOUR CO-SPONSOR, THE NATIONAL FOUNDATION-MARCH OF DIMES, HAVE BUILT INTO EACH OF THE DOZEN STATEWIDE CONFERENCES THAT SO FAR HAVE BEEN CONDUCTED. AND I AM PROUD THAT THE U.S. OFFICE OF EDUCATION HAS BEEN ABLE TO ASSIST YOU IN IMPLEMENTING THE FOLLOWUP ACTIVITIES. MY REGRET IS THAT BUDGETARY LIMITATIONS HAVE LIMITED THE SIZE OF OUR SUPPORT.

THE ROLE OF PARENT-TEACHER ASSOCIATIONS IN EDUCATION IS OF CRITICAL IMPORTANCE. WITH THEIR INTIMATE KNOWLEDGE OF THEIR COMMUNITY, MEMBERS OF PTA'S ARE IN SPLENDID POSITION TO TAP AND PULL TOGETHER THE DIVERSE TALENTS AND RESOURCES WITHIN THEIR COMMUNITY--HEALTH AND WELFARE AGENCIES ARE TWO EXAMPLES--WHICH ARE SO ESSENTIAL IN PLANNING A BALANCED PARENTHOOD CURRICULUM TAILORED TO EACH COMMUNITY'S PARTICULAR NEEDS.

THE U.S. OFFICE OF EDUCATION AND OTHER AGENCIES OF THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION, AND WELFARE HAVE PARENTING EDUCATION HIGH ON THEIR AGENDAS. I LOOK UPON OUR JOINT ENDEAVORS--YOURS AND OURS--IN

TERMS OF A PARTNERSHIP DEDICATED TO STRENGTHENING FAMILY TIES AND FURTHERING THE CAUSE OF EDUCATION IN THE HOME AND THE SCHOOL. LET ME TELL YOU SOME OF THE THINGS WE ARE DOING.

THE OFFICE OF EDUCATION, THE OFFICE OF CHILD DEVELOPMENT, AND THE NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF MENTAL HEALTH HAVE LAUNCHED A PROJECT WE CALL EDUCATION FOR PARENTHOOD.

THIS PROJECT SEEKS TO INCREASE ADOLESCENTS' AWARENESS OF THE NEEDS OF CHILDREN AND EMPHASIZES THE ROLE OF PARENTS IN FOSTERING A CHILD'S DEVELOPMENT. EDUCATION FOR PARENTHOOD AIMS TO STRENGTHEN THE FAMILY AS THE MOST IMPORTANT COMPONENT IN A CHILD'S EARLY DEVELOPMENT. THE PRIMARY OBJECTIVE OF THE PROJECT IS TO ENCOURAGE AND ASSIST STATE AND LOCAL SCHOOL SYSTEMS AND COMMUNITY AGENCIES TO DESIGN AND IMPLEMENT PARENTHOOD EDUCATION CURRICULUMS. THERE ARE PROVISIONS FOR BOTH SCHOOL AND NON-SCHOOL BASED ACTIVITIES.

THREE MAJOR PROJECTS WITHIN EDUCATION FOR PARENTHOOD ARE:

DEVELOPMENT AND DISSEMINATION OF A CURRICULUM FOR SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS CALLED "EXPLORING CHILDHOOD."
A SURVEY AND REPORT ON OTHER PARENTHOOD EDUCATION CURRICULUMS AND MATERIALS NOW BEING USED IN SCHOOLS.
GRANTS TO SEVEN NATIONAL VOLUNTARY ORGANIZATIONS TO PROMOTE YOUTH-SERVING PROGRAMS.

THE "EXPLORING CHILDHOOD" CURRICULUM WAS DEVELOPED FOR SECONDARY SCHOOLS AND COMBINES CLASSROOM INSTRUCTION ABOUT CHILD DEVELOPMENT

WITH PRACTICAL EXPERIENCE IN WORKING WITH YOUNG CHILDREN. THE COURSE IS A YEAR-LONG ELECTIVE HIGHLY ADAPTABLE TO THE VARYING NEEDS OF ADOLESCENTS OF DIFFERENT CULTURAL BACKGROUNDS AND TO THE LOCAL REQUIREMENTS OF COMMUNITY SCHOOL SYSTEMS.

UNDERLYING THE PHILOSOPHY OF "EXPLORING CHILDHOOD" IS THE IMPORTANCE OF SELF-AWARENESS. AS ADOLESCENTS LEARN TO EVALUATE THEMSELVES THEY GAIN CONFIDENCE IN THEIR OWN ACTIONS AND DEEPER UNDERSTANDING OF WHAT CONDITIONS ARE NEEDED FOR GROWTH IN OTHERS.

"EXPLORING CHILDHOOD" IS ONLY ONE WAY IN WHICH THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT IS INVOLVED IN PROMOTING PARENTHOOD EDUCATION PROGRAMS. WE ARE BUILDING A FILE OF CURRICULUM AND TEACHING MATERIALS THAT ARE NOW IN USE THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY. THIS INFORMATION IS AVAILABLE TO SCHOOL DISTRICTS.

WE HAVE ALSO PUBLISHED A BOOKLET DESCRIBING 15 SUCCESSFUL PARENTHOOD EDUCATION PROGRAMS. IT IS CALLED "EDUCATION FOR PARENTHOOD AND SCHOOL-AGE PARENTS." WE ALSO CONTINUE TO PUBLISH REPORTS ON APPLICABLE RESEARCH AS IT BECOMES KNOWN. THROUGH OUR ANALYSIS OF EXEMPLARY PROGRAMS, A COMPREHENSIVE EDUCATION FOR PARENTHOOD CURRICULUM MODEL IS BEGINNING TO FORM.

AS PART OF THE EDUCATION FOR PARENTHOOD PROJECT, SEVEN NATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS RECEIVED GRANTS TO DEVELOP PROGRAMS TO HELP 'TEEN AGERS PREPARE FOR PARENTHOOD BY WORKING WITH YOUNG CHILDREN.

THE ORGANIZATIONS ARE BOY'S CLUBS OF AMERICA, BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA, NATIONAL 4-H CLUB FOUNDATION OF AMERICA, GIRL SCOUTS OF THE

USA, NATIONAL FEDERATION OF SETTLEMENTS AND NEIGHBORHOOD CENTERS, THE SALVATION ARMY, AND THE APPALACHIAN PROGRAM OF THE SAVE THE CHILDREN FOUNDATION.

SO FAR I HAVE CONCENTRATED ON THE APPLICATION OF PARENTING EDUCATION PROGRAMS TO 'TEEN-AGERS. CERTAINLY THE NEED FOR ADOLESCENT EDUCATION IS MOST STRIKING, BUT OTHER SEGMENTS OF SOCIETY ALSO WARRANT ATTENTION. ALL PARENTS DESERVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO ENRICH THE INTELLECTS OF THEIR CHILDREN. PUBLIC EDUCATION SHOULD ASSURE THE AVAILABILITY OF THIS OPPORTUNITY TO ALL.

I HAVE RECOMMENDED THAT THE STATES' MAJOR DRIVE IN THE FIELD OF EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION BE TO THE HOMES, THROUGH NEIGHBORHOOD SCHOOLS.

NEIGHBORHOOD SCHOOLS CAN DELIVER COMPREHENSIVE CHILD DEVELOPMENT SERVICES TO THE COMMUNITY. THROUGH THE NEIGHBORHOOD SCHOOLS WE CAN BRING PRESCHOOLERS PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES AS WELL AS THE SOCIAL REHABILITATION SERVICES OFFERED BY STATE AND FEDERAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS. THE SCHOOLS SHOULD BECOME A SOURCE OF INFORMATION AND ASSISTANCE.

LOCAL PTA'S SHOULD REACH OUT IN POWERFUL AND PERSUASIVE WAYS TO ATTRACT PARENTS TO THEIR NEIGHBORHOOD SCHOOL, WHERE THEY CAN BE TAUGHT, SUPPORTED, AND ENCOURAGED IN THEIR EFFORTS TO BECOME MORE EFFECTIVE PARENTS.

SCHOOL LIBRARIES SHOULD OFFER EDUCATIONAL TOYS FOR LENDING AS WELL AS BOOKS AND OTHER INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS THAT PARENTS COULD

USE IN THE HOME. HEALTH, WELFARE, REHABILITATION, AND OTHER AGENCIES SHOULD BE ENCOURAGED TO UTILIZE THE NEIGHBORHOOD SCHOOL AS A SOURCE OF SERVICES.

A NUMBER OF WAYS COULD BE UTILIZED TO ATTRACT PARENTS TO SCHOOL -- SPECIAL INVITATIONS TO PROGRAMS AND EVENTS INVOLVING THEIR CHILDREN, FOR EXAMPLE.

PROSPECTIVE PARENTS SHOULD NOT BE OVERLOOKED IN SUCH PROGRAMING. THOSE WHO WANT TO BECOME PARENTS, OR THINK THEY WANT TO BECOME PARENTS, SHOULD BE PROVIDED WITH KNOWLEDGE OF THE SKILLS, CONSTANT POSITIVE REINFORCEMENT, STABILITY, LOVE, AND TIME NEEDED TO BE DEVOTED TO INFANTS AND CHILDREN IF THEY ARE TO GROW AND DEVELOP INTO HEALTHY, RESPONSIBLE CITIZENS.

WHILE THE IMPORTANCE OF THE SCHOOL IN TEACHING PEOPLE TO BE PARENTS IS OBVIOUS, OTHER AGENCIES ARE AVAILABLE FOR THIS TYPE OF EDUCATION AND SHOULD BE USED. FOR EXAMPLE, UNDER AN OFFICE OF EDUCATION CONTRACT WITH THE CHILD WELFARE LEAGUE, THE "EXPLORING CHILDHOOD" COURSE IS BEING ADOPTED FOR USE IN FOSTER-PARENT TEACHING PROGRAMS.

WE ARE HELPING THE HAWAII STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION SCHEDULE SITES AND ARRANGEMENTS FOR VIDEOTAPING "HAND-IN-HAND," A PARENTHOOD EDUCATION TELECAST SERIES. THIS IS A LOCAL EDUCATIONAL TV EFFORT DESIGNED TO INCREASE COMMUNICATION SKILLS, SELF-AWARENESS, AND FAMILY AND SOCIAL UNDERSTANDING.

WE ARE SUPPORTING THE JOHNS HOPKINS UNIVERSITY IN PROMOTION OF A SERIES OF "INFANT PLAY AND LEARNING" MANUALS TELLING PARENTS HOW THEY CAN STIMULATE INFANT DEVELOPMENT IN THE FIRST YEAR OF LIFE. THE BOOKS HELP PARENTS MAKE BETTER SELECTIONS OF PLAY MATERIALS FOR INFANTS AND TO MAKE BETTER USE OF THOSE THEY SELECT.

MANY LOCAL COMMUNITIES AND EDUCATION ORGANIZATIONS ARE STRIVING TO SET UP EDUCATION PROGRAMS FOR PARENTS.

CORNELL UNIVERSITY IS ESTABLISHING A TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE CLEARINGHOUSE. THE CITY OF ALEXANDRIA, VIRGINIA, AND THE NORTHERN VIRGINIA MENTAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION ARE DESIGNING SUPPORT SYSTEMS FOR PARENTS OF HANDICAPPED CHILDREN AND PUTTING THEM INTO OPERATION. THE UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND IS ADAPTING "EXPLORING CHILDHOOD" MATERIALS IN TRAINING PARAPROFESSIONAL HOME VISITORS.

THESE ARE BUT A FEW OF THE LOCAL PARENTHOOD EDUCATION PROGRAMS NOW IN PROGRESS. I ENCOURAGE YOU TO LOOK INTO THE POSSIBILITY OF SETTING UP AN <u>EDUCATION FOR PARENTHOOD</u> PROGRAM IN YOUR COMMUNITY.

SOMEONE ONCE SAID "PARENTS TEACH MORE THAN A HUNDRED SCHOOLMASTERS." BUT, BY TEACHING CHILDREN HOW TO TEACH THEIR CHILDREN WHEN THE TIME COMES, SCHOOLMASTERS CAN GUARANTEE THE BEST POSSIBLE EDUCATION AND CAN ASSURE THAT FREEDOM OF OPPORTUNITY WILL REMAIN AN ACTIVE PART OF THE AMERICAN HERITAGE.

###